

IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

Claim 1 (Previously Presented): A process for preparing autocatalytic polyether alcohols comprising reacting H-functional starter substances containing at least one amino group which is catalytically active in the urethane reaction, and at least one group which is reactive toward alkylene oxides, with alkylene oxides, comprising

- a) dissolving the starter substance in a solvent,
- b) reacting the solution with alkylene oxides.

Claim 2 (Previously Presented): The process as claimed in claim 1, wherein the solvent is a polyether alcohol having a hydroxyl number of from 20 to 1200 mg KOH/g and a functionality of from 2 to 8.

Claim 3 (Previously Presented): The process as claimed in claim 1, wherein the solvent is a polyether alcohol having a hydroxyl number of from 20 to 100 mg KOH/g and a functionality of from 2 to 3.

Claim 4 (currently amended): The process as claimed in claim 1, wherein a polyether alcohol which has been prepared by addition of alkylene oxides onto H-functional starter substances in the presence of an alkaline catalyst and from which the ~~a~~ catalyst has not been removed after the addition reaction of the alkylene oxides is used as solvent.

Claim 5 (Previously Presented): The process as claimed in claim 1, wherein organic solvents which are chemically inert toward alkylene oxides are used as solvent.

Claim 6 (Previously Presented): The process as claimed in claim 1, wherein step b) is carried out in the presence of an alkaline catalyst.

Claim 7 (currently amended): The process as claimed in claim 1, wherein ~~the a catalyst is used in step b) is used~~ in an amount of from 0.1 to 3.0% by weight, based on the weight of all H-functional starter substances.

Claim 8 (Previously Presented): The process as claimed in claim 1, wherein said alkylene oxide is at least one selected from the group consisting of ethylene oxide, propylene oxide and/or butylene oxide.

Claim 9 (Previously Presented): The process as claimed in claim 1, wherein the starter substances containing at least one amino group which is catalytically active toward the urethane reaction, and at least one group which is reactive toward alkylene oxides, are selected from the group consisting of dimethylaminoethylamine, dimethylaminopropylamine, diethylaminoethylamine, diethylaminopropylamine, N-(3-dimethylaminopropyl)-N,N-diisopropanolamine, dimethylethanolamine, N,N-dimethylaminoethyl N'-methyl-N'-hydroxyethylaminoethyl ether, N,N-bis(3-dimethylaminopropyl)amino-2-propanolamine, bis(N,N-dimethyl-3-aminopropyl)amine, N,N-dimethylaminoethoxyethanol, N-(3-aminopropyl)imidazole, N-(2-dimethylaminoethyl)-N-methylethanolamine, N-(2-hydroxypropyl)imidazole, dimethylaminohexanol and mixtures of at least two of the compounds mentioned.

Claim 10 (Previously Presented): A polyether alcohol prepared by the process as claimed in claim 1.

Claim 11 (Previously Presented): A process for producing polyurethanes comprising reacting polyisocyanates with compounds having at least two hydrogen atoms which are reactive toward isocyanate groups, wherein a polyether alcohol as claimed in claim 9 is used as catalyst.

Claim 12 (Previously Presented) The process of claim 1, wherein said solvent is a polyether alcohol having a functionality from 3 to 8 and a hydroxyl number from 200 to 1,200 mg KOH/g.

Claim 13 (Previously Presented) The process of claim 1, wherein said solvent is a polyether alcohol having a functionality from 2 to 3 and a hydroxyl number from 20 to 200 mg KOH/g.

Claim 14 (Previously Presented) The process of claim 1, wherein said solvent is a polyether alcohol and is present in a ratio of starter substance to polyether alcohol of 1:20 to 20:1.

Claim 15 (Previously Presented) The process of claim 1, wherein said at least one amino group which is catalytically active in the urethane reaction is a tertiary amino group.

Claim 16 (Previously Presented) The process of claim 1, wherein said at least one group which is reactive toward alkylene oxides is at least one group selected from the group consisting of a primary amino group, a secondary amino group and a hydroxyl group.

Claim 17 (Previously Presented) The process of claim 1, wherein reacting is carried out so that an average of 1 to 8 molecules of alkylene oxide are added onto each active hydrogen atom of said starter substance.

Claim 18 (Previously Presented) The process of claim 1, wherein reacting is carried out so that an average of 2 to 4 molecules of alkylene oxide are added onto each active hydrogen atom of said starter substance.

Claim 19 (Previously Presented) The process of claim 1, wherein reacting is carried out at a pressure of 0.1 to 1.0 MPa and a temperature of 80 to 140°C.

Claim 20 (Previously Presented) The process of claim 1, wherein reacting comprises an after-reaction phase.